

Message Text

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ACTION NSF-02

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FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7156

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EO 11652: NA
TAGS: TGEN OSCI PL
SUBJ: NSF/SFCP -- NSF'S LIST OF PROPOSALS TO BE JOINTLY FINANCED
AND POLISH -FINANCED

REF: WARSAW 7410

1. JOINT FUND TREASURER PETRUS RAISED WITH THE SCIENCE
COUNSLOR AUGUST 30 SOME DIFFICULTIES HE SAID ARE RESULTING
FROM NSF'S STAND THAT INCREASED TRAVEL COSTS "MUST" BE
OFFSET BY TRANSFERRING FUNDS FROM OTHER LINE ITEMS IN
PROJECT BUDGETS, AND WITHOUT REDUCING THE NUMBER OR DURATION
OF TRIPS FOR US AND POLISH SCIENTISTS IN THE ORIGINAL BUDGET.
PETRUS HAS NOT YET RECEIVED THE LETTER NSF MAILED TO HIM
(WE GAVE HIM THE EMBASSY'S COPY), BUT A NUMBER OF POLISH
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS WHO HAVE GOTTEN THEIR INDIVIDUAL
LETTERS FROM NSF ARE CALLING VARIOUS POLISH OFFICIALS
INVOLVED WITH THE JOINT FUND, INCLUDING PETRUS, TO SEEK
ADVICE ON WHAT TO DO.

2. HE SAID THE POLISH ADMINISTRATORS (WHOM HE INDICATED
INCLUDED THOSE FROM THE SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION
MINISTRY, FINANCE MINISTRY, AND PAN) FEEL STRONGLY THAT
A MORE FLEXIBLE POSITION SHOULD BE ADOPTED. HE NOTED THAT,
ON THE AVERAGE, ABOUT 20 PERCENT OF EACH PROJECT'S BUDGET
HAS BEEN ALLOCATED FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL, DIVIDED MORE
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OR LESS EQUALLY BETWEEN AMERICANS AND POLES. THE POLISH
ADMINISTRATORS ARE PREPARED TO ACCEPT AN INCREASE TO 30
PERCENT WITHOUT DEMUR. HOWEVER, IN SOME CASES, TRAVEL COSTS
WOULD AMOUNT TO AS MUCH AS 50 TO 60 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL
PROJECT BUDGET IF NSF'S RULES ARE FOLLOWED. FOR EXAMPLE,
THE BUDGET OF PROJECT F7F053P, "MULTI-HADRON PRODUCTION AND
HADRON STRUCTURE", TOTALS 3,465,042 ZLOTYS, OF WHICH

1,302,642 HAD BEEN FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL. BUT, BECAUSE OF INCREASED COSTS, THIS ALREADY HIGH FIGURE WOULD BE RAISED TO ABOUT 2,278,000 ZLOTYS SIMPLY FOR TRAVEL. PETRUS NOTED THAT SUCH TRAVEL COSTS IN RELATION TO THE TOTAL BUDGET REACH THE LEVEL OF ABSURDITY AND , MOREOVER, COULD NOT POSSIBLE BE OFFSET BY TRANSFERRING FUNDS FROM OTHER BUDGET ITEMS. ON THE LATTER POINT NE NOTED ALSO, WITH RESPECT TO THE OVERHEAD COSTS WHICH ARE BUILT IN TO EVERY BUDGET, THAT A STANDARD SUPPLEMENTARY PERCENTAGE, AMOUNTING TO 35 PERCENT OF THE FIGURE FOR SALARIES AND BENEFITS, WAS APPROVED BY THE US-POLISH JOINT BOARD AT ITS FIRST MEETING IN OCTOBER 1974, AND IS INCORPORATED IN THE "PRINCIPLES OF UNIFIED COST ACCOUNTING METHOD" WHICH IS ATTACHMENT 3 TO THE 1974 JOINT BOARD DECISION DOCUMENT.

3. PETRUS EMPHASIZED THAT THE POLES ARE READY TO FOLLOW A MODERATE COURSE REGARDING BUDGET REVISIONS. AS THE "FIRST EXAMPLE" OF HOW THE POLES BELIEVE THE PROBLEMS CAN BE SOLVED, HE PROVIDED COPIES OF A REVISED BUDGET FOR PROJECT F7F061P, "BIOENGINEERING STUDIES OF THE MUSCLE SKELETON SYSTEM AND COORDINATED MUSCLE STIMULATION", WHICH WILL BE POUCHED FOR NSF CONSIDERATION. HE SAID THAT INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL COSTS HAD BEEN REDUCED IN THIS REVISED BUDGET, BY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE US AND POLISH PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS, AS THE RESU
T OF FURTHER STUDY AFTER THE
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ORIGINAL BUDGET WAS PREPARED. HE ALSO NOTED THAT A REVISED BUDGET FOR THE PROJECT F7F062P, "STRUCTURAL ASPECTS OF VEHICLE CRASH WORTHINESS", SUBMITTED LAST MONTH, INVOLVED TRANSFER TO THE TRAVEL CATEGORY OF ABOUT 64,000 ZLOTYS SHIFTED FROM THE CATEGORIES ON SALARIES AND, ACCORDINGLY, OVERHEAD.

4. REGARDING GENERAL PROCEDURES, PETRUS SAID THAT THE POLISH ADMINISTRATORS WOULD PREFER THAT LETTERS LIKE THOSE JUST SENT BY NSF REGARDING BUDGET REVISIONS BE ADDRESSED TO OFFICIALS OF THE COORDINATING INSTITUTIONS RATHER THAN DIRECTLY TO THE PRINCIAPL INVESTIGATORS, WHO HE SAID ARE MUCH LESS FAMILIAR WITH THE ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS, TEND TO BECOME "CONFUSED", AND END UP REFERRING THE MATTER ANYWAY TO THE COORDINATORS. HE ALSO COMMENTED THAT THE POLES DEPLORE AS INAPPROPRIATE THE USE OF IMPERATIVE LANGUAGE CONCERNING MUTUAL ARRANGEMENTS UNDER A PROGRAM WHOSE ESSENCE IS COOPERATION.

5. THROUGHOUT THE DISCUSSION, PETRUS INDICATED THE POLES ARE ANXIOUS TO MEET NSF'S PARTICULAR CONCERNS TO ASSURE NECESSARY TRAVEL, AND TO MOVE FORWARD AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE

TO ACTIVATE THE NEW PROJECTS WITH NSF. HE THOUGH THE
CURRENT PROBLEMS REPRESENTED A TEMPEST IN A TEAPOT, AND
HE STRESSED HIS HOPE THAT THEY COULD BE RESOLVED QUICKLY IN A
SPIRIT OF FULL HARMONY WITH NSF.

6. COMMENT: AS INDICATED IN REF, WE SHARE MANY OF PETRUS'S
CONCERNS AND URGE NSF TO ADOPT A FLEXIBLE, CASE-BY-CASE
APPROACH TO TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS IN THE BUDGET REVISIONS.
WE DO NOT BELIEVE NSF WOULD HAVE ANYTHING TO LOSE.
SCHAUFELLE

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